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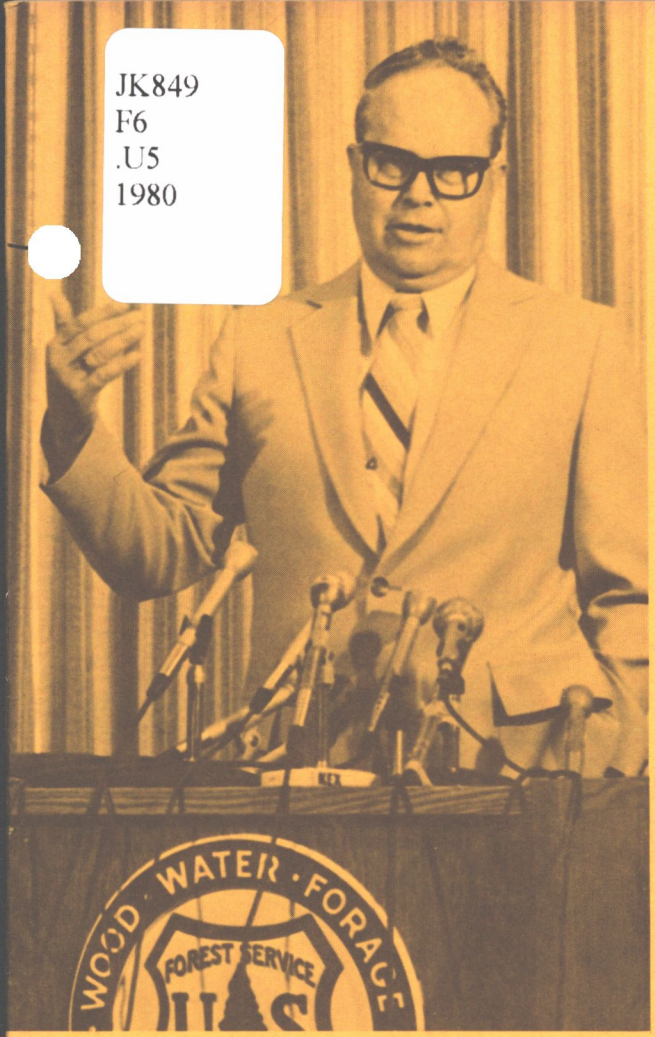
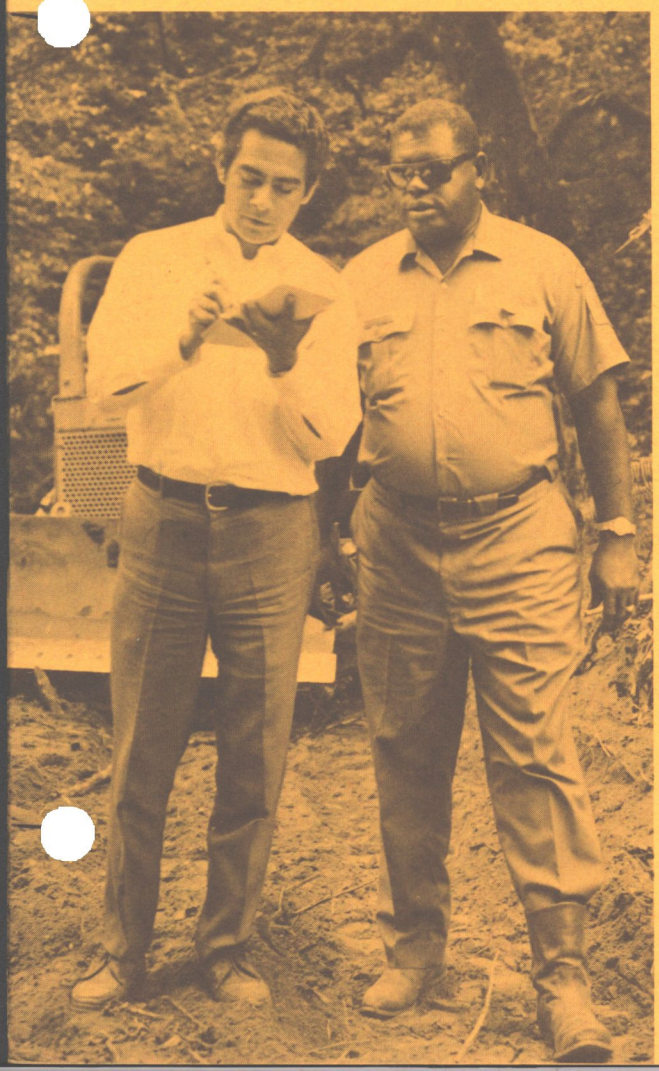


WORKING WITH THE PRESS



FOREST SERVICE • USDA
PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION

Foreword

The title of this booklet would be more accurate (but more cumbersome) if it were "Working with Public Information Media Personnel".

Forest Service employees are increasingly involved in giving information to, and answering inquiries from, television and radio news people, authors, free-lance writers, and others, in addition to the "press".

WORKING WITH THE PRESS

Forest Service • USDA
Pacific Northwest Region

1980

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Revision of 1977 Edition

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1

You and the Press and the Public

You're a busy Forest Service employee. You have plenty of work to do. Maybe you're thinking, "I'm a professional in forest land management, not a would-be reporter. Why should I mess with the press and maybe get misquoted? Let them dig up their own news! Let an Information Officer do it!"

Why "Mess With the Press"——?

Yes, you are primarily a professional—but a professional in public service. All of us in the Forest Service are public servants. The taxpayers pay our salaries, and are entitled to know what we are giving them for their money.

The Constitution guarantees freedom of the press. The press has a right to news about public matters.

There is a possibility of being misquoted, because newsmen, like all of us, occasionally make mistakes. Only a very serious error is worth calling to the attention of the writer or editor; a "correction" rarely catches up with an error. Often, an error occurs because of lack of information or knowledge. A newsman sometimes has only superficial knowledge of the Forest Service or the National Forests.

"Let them dig up their own news" ——?

The editor of a weekly paper or small radio or TV station may have little or no staff. Many people bring news to him. A daily newspaper or larger stations have more local and wire news than they can use. The mail brings in news releases from everybody and his uncle, including other Government agencies. The newsman may not have time to get around to you, or may be at remote distances.

The old idea that "good work will make itself known in due time" may have been plausible 30 years ago, before organizations of every kind and size learned public relations techniques. Nowadays the organization that needs public understanding and doesn't speak up for it is likely to become a sphinx buried in the shifting sands of public opinion. A modern definition of public relations is "Good performance—publicly appreciated." If we don't tell the public about our work, how can people appreciate it?

"Let an Information Officer do it" ——?

The Information Office handles news of Regional importance, and doesn't always know what's doing on a Forest or Ranger District. News usually originates at or near the point of occurrence. Editors prefer news from local sources to that of remote points.

As the Chief says, public relations is the job of everyone in the Service. We're all in the same boat, and all must take our turn at the oars.

"It says in the Manual"

"The organic act establishing the Department of Agriculture . . . charges the Department with the duty 'to acquire the diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture, in the most general and comprehensive sense of that word . . .'"

"The general objectives of Information activities (not only of the Information Office, but of all Forest Officers) are to create and maintain an informed, intelligent, but critical and exacting public opinion as to objectives, needs, and methods of the Forest Service; and

to stimulate public interest in, understanding of, and support for these objectives . . ."

Read appropriate portions of the Manual (1600) for a fresh look at policy and procedure for working with press, radio and television.

> "Use the press first, last and all the time if you want to reach the public."
> —Gifford Pinchot

2
Good Press Relations

To have a good "crop" of press relations, you need to plow, plant, and cultivate.

First step is to make a list of all newspaper, TV and radio stations in your area—name of editors (and any reporters who call on you), mail address and telephone number. Specify the "deadline" day for submitting stories to a weekly paper; for a daily paper, specify if it is a.m. or p.m.

List them all; a public officer must not play favorites. List also the local newsmen who are correspondents for wire services (United Press International or Associated Press) or for newspapers of wide circulation (such as Portland, Seattle, and Spokane dailies). List radio and television stations and mail your releases to the attention of the news director or assignment editor. Also list those media outside your zone of responsibility that are interested in your news releases. National Forest lists need to be canvassed annually to make sure those on the list really want what we send them.

Getting Acquainted

Become acquainted with your editor or reporter. Make occasional visits. Have something interesting to "talk shop" about, and visit when he or she is not near a deadline. For a weekly editor, deadline day is usually Wednesday. For an afternoon daily, visit after press time, say 2 or 3 p.m.; for a morning daily, in the morning after the paper has gone to press.

When visiting an editor for the first time, figure in advance what kind of news you usually have so you can tell him what to expect from you. Settle the working agreement—will he or his staff call on you? If you're located away from his town, when should you phone or mail news to him? Size him up as to whether he has basic knowledge of the Forest Service and its activities. If not, in future contacts you can supply him with Forest Service publications and, through discussion, give him informative background as an aid in handling news and arriving at his editorial opinions. Offer him a trip on the ground to see an area in which he shows an interest.

Members of the Press

Be fair to members of the press, and they will reciprocate. "High hat" or "cold shoulder" manners cause only trouble. News people are members of the profession of journalism. Most are college graduates. Almost always they are courteous, open-minded, accurate, and trustworthy.

"Off the record" is a trite expression, and irritating to a newsman. It strikes at his living, which depends on his getting news that can be used. If a newsman asks you about some business that is awaiting decision or approval, explain courteously, "It hasn't been worked out yet. It's too early for comment." If you promise a story later, make a "promise card" and see that he gets the story when it breaks.

The only man who has a right to say "Don't print that story!" is the editor.

Scoops and Such

When a newsman initiates a story by suggesting it to you or getting it on his own initiative, don't "scoop" him to a competitor. But if *you* initiate a story, release it to all news media on your list.

If a reporter telephones a question that might involve policy or repercussions, you may need a minute or two to think it over; so arrange to phone back your reply at an agreed time.

Don't be evasive. In any interview answer questions "yes" or "no" as much as possible. If you don't know an answer, say "I'm sorry, I don't know that," then try to get the answer from someone who will know. Newsmen respect people who don't claim to know all the answers.

They may ask you a question you don't have the knowledge or authority to discuss; just say so politely, and arrange to get the answer from the proper authority.

When you give news verbally, to a new editor or reporter, size him up by the first few stories he handles for you. If you find that verbal information is not handled accurately, give him news in written form. However, distorted stories result more often from lack of information than from a ready supply of it.

A Good Working Relationship

Newsmen welcome basic indoctrination. Give them a map of your Forest, a new Forest Service publication now and then, and take opportunities to explain the background of your activities.

EDITOR WITH INFORMATION OFFICER ON SHORT WILDERNESS HIKE.

Take them along on a field trip or inspection trip; or plan a show-me trip that will give the makings of a special article or broadcast news feature.

Give them any tips that come your way about important news outside the Forest Service. They'll apreciate it.

Once you have established good press relations, you will likely find newsmen taking the initiative in telephoning or calling on you for news.

Develop a good working relationship with your newsman. Such relationships in the past have done much to store up a reservoir of public understanding and good will for the Forest Service. Often, this reservoir helps us to survive a drought (adverse criticism).

"Through all my working days, a part of my job, in office and out, and most essential part, has been to estimate and understand public opinion, and to arouse, create, guide, and apply it."

—Gifford Pinchot

3
What IS News?

A Forest Officer doesn't have to be a professional news hawk in order to handle information work. People are not born with a "nose for news". Newsmen develop it with practice—and you can develop it as much as you need to for your work with the press.

TELEVISION REPORTER REPORTS FROM SCENE OF FOREST FIRE.

When you tell a fellow worker about someone getting a promotion, or tell a neighbor about some recent happening in your neighborhood, you used your "nose for news". You picked out and reported to them some information that you thought would be new and interesting to them. It's the same with Forest Service news, except that you will be picking out information that will be new and interesting to a large number of people.

News has been defined in many ways. It all boils down to this: News is information which is new and/or interesting to the public.

News Stories

A news story usually needs six elements—Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How. Let's call them the Six Points.

News stories fall into two classes; straight news stories and feature stories. Decide which one it will be before you start writing.

Straight news stories are the kind you'll be handling most of the time. They are short, factual reports of happenings or developments: A campground is planned, enlarged, completed; an area is given a special designation; a problem with vandals, or a case of vandalism; a person is transferred and his successor named; a range reseeding project is started or completed; a wildlife study is planned, or results announced; a watershed study; timber harvested; number of recreation visits, etc. Some straight news stories, such as fires or search and rescue, would have to be given verbally in order to still be NEWS.

Feature stories are sometimes referred to as special articles. This type of story gives you a chance to interpret our activities and programs. Feature stories are news with a special touch, such as human interest, or a forester's interpretation of the application of research to

PRESS CONFERENCES FOR HIGH OFFICIALS BRING MASS COVERAGE.

his land management work. TV stations also want film features, especially those features without too much time element. Stations do not have adequate staff to travel very far very often for a story, but they will travel a considerable distance if the story is appealing. And if the news people can do two or three feature stories on one trip, whether or not they are Forest Service stories, the chances of getting the news people out in the field are even better.

A human interest story is about any subject—children, animals, comedy, pathos, romance, etc.—which may touch the interest of people through their emotions. It is a short feature story. To illustrate; usually a search and rescue operation is straight news; but a small child lost in the forest is a human interest story as well.

Facts Plus Significance

Information usually means facts, and should include opinions only when necessary. Newsmen do not want a bunch of opinions offered as a news story; however, they want to get facts plus the significance that makes the facts interesting and meaningful.

Our objective is not to entertain people or to engage in press-agentry of the circus-coming-to-town kind. It is to "stimulate public interest in, understanding of, and support for the objectives of the Forest Service."

We need to give out not only the bare facts of news, but also the significant facts. Example: a timber sale would provide the bare facts about the volume sold, name and location of the purchaser, etc. Add the significant facts that this timber will be cut in accordance with certain proven forestry practices; that it relates particularly to other resource uses such as wildlife, water or recreation; that it helps ensure a sustained yield of timber, and stability for the sawmill, its employees and the nearby community. Or, if it's a case of "high risk" timber, explain in plain English what that type of cutting is.

A variety of significant stories, instead of routine stories, will lessen the lingering impression that the Forest Service exists mainly to fight fires and sell timber. Also, if we don't tell people about resource management in the National Forests, how can we expect them to know the difference, for example, between a Forest Ranger and a Park Ranger?

When is an Opinion News?

Sometimes a Forest Officer's opinion is news—as in the case of the future effect of opening or closing an area to certain uses. Then the newsman will need to quote you or your superior as the source of that opinion.

A news story should quote the authority for that story. Don't let false modesty keep you from giving your name and title when it is needed. It is desirable that a Ranger or a Supervisor be well known in his area. In the case of news from a Supervisor's Office, if the Supervisor has delegated someone to act as information officer, it is still desirable to quote the Supervisor as the source of news. And use his full name. For sake of variety, newsmen sometimes attribute a story to "U.S. Forest Service headquarters" or "U.S. Forest Service officials".

Newsmen usually don't show you their "copy" for review before publication. For you to demand this would be to attempt censorship—something the press tolerates only in time of war. In the rare case of a story involving highly important consequences or technical matters, you can ask for the privilege of reading the story in advance. If you receive this privilege, use it sparingly and tactfully. With a technical story, confine your suggested changes to technical facts; let the editor take care of the language and style.

A few don'ts:

Don't ask "Will you guarantee to get this in the paper?" When publication is important, say so. Do this rarely.

Don't ask him to send you a clipping. He is too busy.

Don't ask him to "play up this story". Let it stand on its own merit.

Avoid controversial issues or policy matters, unless you are authorized to discuss them. Go to higher authority when necessary.

A Ranger should not give out news about other Ranger Districts. A Forest should not give out news about other Forests, Pacific Northwest Region, Pacific Northwest Range and Experiment Station, or news handled by the Chief's Office.

Don't criticize other individuals, organizations or agencies.

> "A free press is the unsleeping guardian of every other right that free men prize."
> —Sir Winston Chruchill

Pictorial News

This can be photos, publications, and forest maps or parts of them, and drawings or other illustrative matter.

These are valuable tools in the job of informing the public. Often a picture is truly "worth a thousand words." Learn to take effective photos that tell a story. (Read "Tips for Forest Photographers", R-8, 1974.)

PHOTOGRAPHS OFTEN CAN MAKE OR BREAK A NEWS STORY.

Pictures can be used to illustrate almost any Forest Service activity or program. Sometimes a good picture may be just the thing needed to "sell" the editor your story. (Tree planting, campground vandalism, on-the-job training, and new personnel are some examples.) In some instances, photographs or other "art" are a must, i.e., for most magazine articles, for newspaper Sunday supplements, television interviews, books.

Forest Service photos are available free for publication. It is desirable that a credit line such as "Photo by U.S. Forest Service" appear under the published photo. We usually don't request return of a print; if it is not returned, order a replacement. There may be circumstances, of course, where you only want to "loan" a photograph with the understanding that every effort will be made to return it to you.

Forest maps or any part of them may be reproduced by newspapers or any other publications, but they should run a credit line, "Map by U.S. Forest Service". Forest Service maps, booklets, etc., are public material and therefore are not subject to the copyright laws.

"Mats" are paperboard matrices which have been pressed from type or photo engravings. Some newspapers and printing plants can use mats to make stereotypes (lead castings) which can then be used in printing. Mats and drawings are supplied free of charge for the Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention campaign.

Many newspapers now use "offset" printing processes that may require special consideration. Find out about your local situation. Most magazines and newspapers prefer 8X10 glossy prints and color transparencies or slides. Television stations can use slides and matte finish black and white photos, and other aids in addition to 16mm film in presenting a story.

The TV News Feature

In the section above, discussion was directed at printed pictorial aids.

There's a whole new dimension in 16mm motion picture footage or video tape. Television stations will cover newsworthy events and activities, particularly if the activity is not too far away and the television is adequately staffed (and there is not too much "big" news breaking at the same time).

Also, TV stations welcome motion picture footage that can be edited into a short feature to be included in regular news programs. Most of us do not have the equipment or ability to provided such footage. However, the audio-visual news field provides a great opportunity. Many people get their news only by television and radio.

The Regional Office has the capability to shoot 16mm film for television. If you have a story of Regional or statewide interest that television stations may not be able to cover, tell the Regional Information Office (Current Information Group) about it; maybe the Information Office can film the story and distribute it to TV stations.

"A free press stands as one of the great interpreters between the Government and the people. To allow it to be fettered is to fetter ourselves."
—U.S. Supreme Court

4
Getting the News

Luck or opportunity presents you some news—actions or happenings as you drive through the Forest; a Forest user who visits you and mentions something he heard or saw; an item in our official mail.

Carry a notebook to jot these things down when away from the office. A Supervisor or Ranger can have his assistants do the same.

Another opportunity comes when a news release sent to newspapers by R.O. Information Office isn't published in a local paper. (Often these releases do not have a local tie-in: we can't always list all Forests or their involvement in a brief release.) You may wish to take your copy of the release, rewrite it to apply to your District or Forest, and submit it to the newspaper that has not used the R.O. release. Often, a reporter will call you for the "local angle" on a Regional release.

But luck can only do so much. Mostly you need to plan for news and dig it out.

A "calendar" of news topics is helpful. Think over the resources in your area, your management programs and your activities. List those that need public attention. Now re-write the list in relation to the time of the year that is most appropriate for a story about each subject —watershed management in spring, fire prevention on May 1, perhaps, campground cleanup on May 15, and so on. Set up a "promise card" for each date.

When you get news involving a person, get the facts that make him a complete person—full name, title, and address or location. Age is needed in the case of death, lost person, etc.

"Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail. Without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently, he who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statues and decisions possible or impossible to execute."
—Abraham Lincoln

5
Writing The News

First, some rules for the form and typing of the news release:

Use standard-size paper.

Leave wide margins, and double-space between lines, so editors have space for editing marks. (You should single-space the last few lines if it will save another sheet of paper.) Indent at least five spaces at the beginning of each paragraph.

When possible, leave two or three inches of space above the start of the article. Editors need this space to write headline information, which edition the story is to be printed in, or other instructions.

Put "Immediate Release" in the upper left-hand corner. A release date is seldom necessary (see "Timing the Release").

In upper right-hand corner, write the name of your Ranger District or Forest, your mail address, phone number, and the date of issuance. (Those Forests that have the printed news release headings need only the date and perhaps the name of the contact person, in case the news person needs to call for more information or clarification.)

A headline is optional. Editors like to write their own.

A dateline at the start of the story stating the place and date is optional.

See the news release sample at the back of this booklet.

If the release runs over one page, put the word "MORE" in parentheses at bottom of page 1. Break the story on a paragraph.

To show the end of your story, use cross-hatches as shown here: ###, or some other symbol that will be clear to the editor.

Writing the Straight News

Most writers keep a dictionary and a thesaurus handy. And aren't too proud to use them.

Don't worry about news style. Nobody expects you to be a professional newsman.

But you can and should put clear thoughts into plain English. The greatest scientific minds, when writing for the public, avoid technical jargon and "two dollar words". Consider the forceful simplicity of the Lord's Prayer and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

Use short sentences and short paragraphs. They are easier for the writer—and the reader, too!

Make the release short and snappy. Don't write more than one page if you can avoid it. A one-page release has more chance of being used than a longer one.

The best way to write is fast. Then, let your words cool and edit them. It's easy to write something too long; real talent lies in being concise. It is an art to be concise yet understood. Like anything else, it takes practice. The best way to learn is under pressure—jump in and try your best. It's helpful to have a competent, understanding person to look at your product and constructively critique it.

A joke (or a newspaper story) is more interesting when it has an interesting or catchy point. The news story should have a news angle —a "hook" or a "peg" on which to hang the facts. Here's how to pick it out:

Jot down your facts on scratch-paper, in the order of the Six Points—Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How. Now read the notes. Which fact is most important, or catchiest? Use that one to start the story.

(If you don't have all the Six Points and are near deadline, give out what you have. An editor prefers to get incomplete news before his deadline, rather than a complete story too late to use.)

In any news story, the first paragraph is called the "lead" (pronounced like creed). In a straight news story, the lead paragraph should include most of the six points. It should be short.

The most important details can go in the second paragraph, next most important details in third paragraph, and so on. If the editor cuts your story, he can then cut from the bottom up.

Writing a Feature Story

A feature story should have all the Six Points, but the points don't have to be in the lead paragraph. Features are more in the short story class; you can use suspense and other writing tricks.

If you have a knack for writing, use it! You're the person who can bring out the significant facts; and the background of Forest Service problems, plans, and actions.

If you're a bit rusty on writing, brush up with some books such as "The Technique of Clear Writing" by Robert Gunning or "The Art of Readable Writing" by Rudolph Flesch.

(Some folks who are expected to write news releases may consider taking a newswriting course at a local college or junior college if such an opportunity exists.)

You can look over the list of news topics, and see which are good "feature" possibilities. You can chronicle the arrival or passing of the seasons on your Forest or District; the introduction of wildlife species or their protection; recreational attractions; the drama of new logging techniques (with some facts worked in about timber management in your

National Forest); the ramifications of attacking and controlling a major fire (or tackle just one phase of it, such as establishing and operating a fire camp); or the significant facts about Forest Officers riding the range with livestock permittees to coordinate forage use. And, don't forget the "people" part of our work—EEO, Civil Rights, programs for youth (YCC), etc.

You may be able to write the story better than the newsman, because your training and your experience in the Service give you first-hand knowledge of these things. And he has so many news sources to contact that he may not have the time to dig for a feature story.

Conversely, if you find you don't have time to write a feature story, you may want to tell a newsman about it and let him do a feature article or film feature (TV) at his convenience. This method is used more and more, because of lack of time and personnel.

One national forest officer says "There are a couple of big potential dividends here besides time-saving for me. First, we are practically guaranteed a better placement and more complete (longer) story because the paper or television station has a time investment, pride of authorship, and confidence in the product. Beyond this, there is plenty of time during the field trip to discuss Forest Service policy, answer the reporter's questions on a multitude of subjects, and develop rapport. It is an excellent process for both the reporter and Forest Service host. It is a good time to get Forest Service managers and reporters together. Finally, the news people love the chance to get out in the woods and away from the daily routine."

SHOW-ME TRIPS ARE A GOOD DEVICE FOR PRODUCING NEWS STORIES WITHOUT WRITING THEM YOURSELF.

6
Distributing the News

News stories carry an invisible tag: "Perishable —Rush!" With a daily newspaper, one day's delay may be the difference between running a story in full on Page 1 or as a paragraph near the want ads.

The importance and interest of a story will determine your distribution. If may be good for local papers only, or also for regional newspapers, whether by direct mailing or through a local correspondent.

Under the heading "For Good Press Relations" we said to make a list of all newspapers, correspondents, radio and TV newscasters, etc., in your area. A Forest Supervisor's list should cover his Zone of Influence. However, if a news item is of interest outside that zone, send it also to news media in the area of interest. Coordinate with other Forests if you intend to overlap their zones with a release that involves them.

Timing the Release

Plan your releases in advance, whenever possible. For releases to weekly editors, plan at least a week in advance. Get your releases to weekly editors early in the week. Most of them go to press on Tuesday or Wednesday and "hit the street" Wednesday or Thursday.

If you have weekly and daily papers in your zone (and radio or TV stations with daily news broadcasts), it's fair to time your news releases for nearly simultaneous use by all of them. Most newspaper editors do not mind being "scooped" a day to two by the broadcast media; some, in fact, think it only whets the appetite of readers to learn more about the story. There is seldom the need for a release date. It is sometimes used to coincide with the time a speech is being made or award being given, or similar instance. All newspaper and radio editors are different, however, and the field officer may have to make a special effort to set up an equitable release system to keep both the newspaper and radio station people happy.

Metropolitan dailies and other media usually ignore a release date, if they do not recognize any necessity for it. Therefore, the Regional Office nearly always puts "immediate release" on its releases, relying on mailing time to give all media the best break possible. However, releases issued on short notice often have to be mailed without regard to the needs of some of the media on the mailing list.

Forest Supervisors should send five copies of their releases to the Regional Forester, marked for attention of Information Office.

R.O. News Releases

These are written or edited in the Information Office and mailed to newspapers, magazines, radio news editors, TV news directors, etc.

The Regional Office mails to all news media in the Region that want to receive news releases. And sometimes mailings are made to areas adjoining Oregon and Washington, or to media in other states. So, a Regional Office news release will go directly to each Forest's news media. The Regional Office, however, can mail by Zone of Responsibility, thereby pinpointing targets whenever possible. News releases are coded at the end to show where the news release went out-Service.

When possible, R.O. releases are mailed to Forest information persons one day in advance of mailing to news media, so that the Forest will not be caught off guard by calls from local news media seeking a local angle on the release. Mailing to the Forests and to news media is simultaneous when the release must be in the hands of newsmen as soon as possible. If a R.O. release will have an obvious effect on a certain Forest or area, the release will be coordinated with the Supervisor(s).

R.O. news release mailing lists are canvassed once a year to keep them up to date. Secretary of Agriculture regulations require that news media signify their desire to receive releases in order to be placed on or kept on the list.

7
Your Friend, The Editor

It's a great feeling to read or hear a news or feature story lauding the Forest Service, or an editorial accurately written. It's bitter medicine when a news story misrepresents us or an editorial wallops us, perhaps without justification.

If an unfavorable editorial shows the editor had insufficient information or inaccurate information, give him the information he needs for proper understanding of the subject.

Don't hit the ceiling if a "friendly" editor takes an editorial poke at you some time. One friendly editor told a Forest Officer: "I get tired of running stories and editorials that show what a good job your outfit is doing. So about once a year I find something to grouse about, and put it in an editorial. It keeps you boys on your toes!"

Editorials criticizing our organization are seldom written by editors who have been kept well informed about our problems and activities. A daily editor may not see all our news releases, and may not remember all the news in his paper, including about you. As we said under "Good Press Relations", an occasional chat with him will give you a chance to keep him informed.

Never tell an editor how to write his editorials. But a fair-minded editor won't mind a suggestion that he consider a certain topic for an editorial. He gets suggestions from many people. He also appreciates important background materials, but don't overload him.

Earn the respect and the confidence of an editor, and he'll invite your viewpoint.

8
Clippings Are a Work Tool

Clippings are needed to appraise public reaction to Forest Service policies and activities and to determine the extent to which releases are used.

Clip all items that are important to the Supervisor's Office, the Regional Office, or the Washington Office.

For this purpose, obtain the handy pad of stickers, Form 1600-2. (Please don't staple.) By mailing clippings the day you clip them, the chore is less burdensome, and the R.O. receives the information while it is current.

If you need your own record of the clipping, copy the clipping and send the original. The Chief's Office and the Regional Office can use original clippings only. The R.O. will pass originals of important clippings on to the Chief after making copies.

See R-6 Supplement, FSM 1651.12, July 1977.

9

(Sample News Release)

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOREST HEADING
OR
NEWS RELEASE
Swauk National Forest

Steptoe, WA 98888
Phone 666-1111
June 1, 1980
News Contact:
Joe Smith

Geological Area Designated

An area of special interest and value has been given recognition under a U.S. Department of Agriculture Regulation, according to John R. Jones, Supervisor of the Swauk National Forest.

Jones said the Regional Forester for the Forest Service had approved establishment of a 1,215-acre Slippery Rock Geological Area east of Bonanza, about 45 miles north of Steptoe off Highway 440.

The Slippery Rock area is in the heart of the Red Mountain range, in which Slippery Rock is a prominent landmark. It has been visited by increasing numbers of recreationists in recent years. Of particular interest to geologists is a lava cave in the area, discovered only three years ago. The cave, with delicate stalactites and stalagmites, is gated, but can be entered with a guide. Persons wishing to see the cave's unique features should check with the Snowshoe Ranger District Office for tour times.

Primitive trails in the Geological Area will be maintained for the benefit of visitors. Provisions for protection of the area include exclusion of horses and motorized vehicles, Supervisor Jones said.

###

(Editor: Photo of Slippery Rock Mountain available on request).

GIVE A HOOT!
DON'T POLLUTE